THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. The 'Economic Times' in its edition of 2nd July, 97 has reported that Karnataka Government's assessment of families Below Poverty Line is much higher than the figures of the Central Government. It further reported that the monthly quota of foodgrains has been slashed by the Central Government from 1,20,000 MT to 35,000 MT, the open market prices of foodgrains have sharply risen as a result. and the Central Cooperative Wholesale stores as well as Agriculture Produce Marketing Societies will have to close following the reduction of 90% of foodgrains.

(c) No, Sir. The allocation of foodgrains to States under Targeted PDS is based on last ten years' average annual lifting by the States/UTs taking into account the requirement of the households below the poverty line (BPL).

(d) The number of BPL households have been worked out as per the methodology of the 'Expert Group' constituted by the Planning Commission under the Chairmanship of Late Prof. Lakdawala. According to Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, the Expert Group methodology gives "poverty estimates closest to ground reality" and as such they have been adopted by Government of India.

Non-Utilisation of Grants for Consumer Courts

928. SHRI SURESH R. JADHAV : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any request has been received from the Maharashtra Government for use of grants sanctioned for 1995-96 and 1996-97 for strengthening the infrastructure of Consumer Courts during 1997-98 because the State Governments could not use these grants during the said period due to certain complicated procedures;

(b) if so, whether a decision has since been taken in the matter; and

(c) if not, the steps being taken by the Government to expedite the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) A request in this regard has been received from the Maharashtra Government.

(b) and (c) Central Government has already accorded permission to the Govt. of Maharashtra to utilise the grant sanctioned in 1995-97 for strengthening the infrastructure of Consumer Courts, during the year 1997-98.

FCI Godowns in A.P.

929. SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in spite of the recommendations made by the FCI, the godowns at Dichipally in Nizamabad in Andhra Pradesh has not yet been constructed;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is not even a single small depot owned by FCI in Nizamabad district and FCI has to depend on CWC/private parties for shortage of accommodation; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in construction of FCI godowns in Dichipally at an early date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (d) At present, Food Corporation of India is not having its own storage capacity at Dichipally which falls under Nizamabad district of Andhra Pradesh region. However, the Central Warehousing Corporation is having 95,760 MT capacity in the district. Of that, FCI is utilising 45,620 MT capacity. Apart from that, FCI has also taken on hire APIDC godowns which are privately owned with the capacity of 19,296 MT. The present hired capacity is considered to be sufficient and the Food Corporation of India does not propose to construct its own capacity because of low utilisation and resource constraints.

[Translation]

Amendment in Police Act

930. SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have set up or propose to set up any committee or commission for giving suggestions to bring about improvement in the Police Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any immediate steps are being taken by the Government for taking stringent penal action against the police in the cases of persecution of citizens without any reasons and in unfounded concocted cases and in the cases of violation of human rights;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) An internal Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Special Secretary (ISP) in the Ministry of Home Affairs to review the recommendations of the National Police Commission including the replacement of the Police Act, 1861.

(c) to (e) It is essential for the States to take such measures as are necessary to ensure that Human Rights are not violated by their police personnel and that penal action is taken against such police personnel who are found guilty of the same. The Government of India, on its part, have, from time to time, been issuing necessary instructions to the States to curb violation of Human Rights by the police personnel. It has clearly been brought to the notice of the States that every allegation of violation of Human Rights by members of law enforcement agencies must be attended to speedily and with transparency and stringent punishment be awarded wherever an official is found guilty.

[English]

Common Minimum Programme in the Fields of Agriculture

931. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Common Minimum Programme in the field of agriculture;

(b) whether the regulations/control put in the way of increasing the farmers income; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government for abolition of such regulations/controls?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) to (c) Relevant extracts from 'the United Front—A Common Approach to Major Policy Matters and a Minimum Prgoramme' are given in the *Statement* attached. The important regulations/orders under the control of the Central Government relate to Rice Milling Industries Regulation Act, 1958, Cold Storage Order, 1980, Milk and Milk Products Control order, 1992, Ginning and Pressing Factories Act, 1925, Sugar (Control) Order, 1966, Sugar (Packing and Marketing) Order, 1970 and quantitative restrictions on exports of agricultural commodities. A beginning has already been made for review and repealing of the Regulations/Control Orders, wherever found feasible. The Rice Milling Industries Regulation Act, 1958 and the Cold Storage Order, 1980 have already been repealed.

Statement

Extracts from the United Front—A Common Approach to Major Policy Matters and a Minimum Programme

The Agriculture sector cries out for reforms. No strategy of economic reforms and regeneration in India can succeed without sustained and broad-based agricultural development. The rate of investment in agriculture will be stepped up. All controls and regulations that are in the way of increasing the incomes of farmers will be reviewed immediately and abolished wherever found unnecessary. Controls on the movement of agricultural products and on the processing of agricultural products will be abolished. Measures will be taken to ensure that farmers receive fair and remunerative prices for their produce. Special attention will be devoted to augmenting rural infrastructure. A special plan for infrastructure development will be taken up in the 100 most backward and poorest districts of the country. The rural credit system will be restructured so as to double the flow of credit to agriculture and agro-industries, particularly to small and marginal farmers, within 5 years. A national policy on water sharing and water management will be devised in order to save farmers all over the country from recurrent floods and droughts.

Agencies that supply inputs to farmers will be professionalised and where found feasible converted into farmer-owned cooperatives. Agricultural research and extension organisations will be thoroughly overhauled. The most modern technology will be brought to the farm sector, e.g. bio-technology for livestock and cold storage for agro-processing.

A comprehensive law will be made by Parliament in respect of agricultural workers to guarantee them minimum